



# WASHOE COUNTY

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CM/ACM	
Finance	<u>DN</u>
DA	<u>✓</u>
Risk Mgt.	<u>N/A</u>
HR	<u>N/A</u>
Other	<u>N/A</u>

## STAFF REPORT

BOARD MEETING DATE: October 28, 2014

**DATE:** October 16, 2014

**TO:** Board of County Commissioners

**FROM:** Bob Webb, Planning Manager, Planning and Development Division  
Community Services Department, 328-3623, bwebb@washoecounty.us

**THROUGH:** William H. Whitney, Division Director, Planning and Development  
Community Services Department, 328-3617, bwhitney@washoecounty.us

**SUBJECT:** Presentation, discussion and possible direction to staff on actions and initiatives to realize a regional licensure program. (All Commission Districts.)

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### SUMMARY

Presentation on actions and initiatives to realize a regional licensure program. The presentation will include actions already completed towards a regional licensure program. Discussion and possible direction to staff on the regional licensure program.

Washoe County Strategic Objective supported by this item: Economic development and diversification.

### PREVIOUS BOARD ACTION

No previous action.

### BACKGROUND

During the September 23, 2014, Washoe County Board of County Commissioner's (Board) meeting, Commissioner Jung requested an update from staff on actions and initiatives towards realizing a regional business license process, which was a goal of the Shared Services Elected Officials Committee (SSEOC).

Attachment A to this staff report is the *Scope of Work for Business Licenses* as approved by the SSEOC on June 16, 2011. The Washoe County Board of County Commissioners approved the *Scope of Work* on August 23, 2011, directing staff to fully participate in the work plan as outlined in the *Scope of Work*. The following is an update on each of the work plan tasks (task status is shown in bold, either completed, in-progress, or a projected completion date):

Task 1.3.1, Document Existing Shared Services. **Completed** and presented to the SSEOC on May 19, 2011.

Task 1.3.2, One stop for multi-jurisdictional licensure. This task required the implementation of a single, shared business license application for all three jurisdictions and the creation of a new multi-jurisdictional license process. This task was **completed** in November of 2011.

Task 1.3.3, On-line license application. All three jurisdictions' licensing software applications cannot accept on-line customer transactions. This deficiency limits the ability of a customer to apply for a license on-line, submit electronic documents as part of that application, verify on-line the status of their application, or pay for a license application or renewal on-line. This deficiency was one of the principal reasons all three jurisdictions, to include the Health District, banded together to contract for a regional license and permit software application. That regional license and permit program contract was awarded to Accela in June of 2014. All three jurisdictions' licensing staff have been working with Accela and Technology Services to design and create the new regional and jurisdiction license applications. The new regional license and permit program is scheduled to go live in **January of 2016**.

Task 1.3.4, Municipal and County code amendments. After approval of the *Scope of Work*, all three jurisdictions' licensing staff met for almost a year to create a regional license flow (which will serve as the basis for the new Accela license applications). During that process, the license staff also identified current individual jurisdiction license processes which could be modified in order to foster common, regional license processes. A list of those process changes is included as Attachment B to this staff report. Many of the process changes have already been implemented by all three jurisdictions' licensing staff. Those processes requiring policy decisions or code amendments are identified in the list. Once the new Accela license and permit program is live, then all three jurisdictions' licensing staff will focus on creating a regional business license (Task 1.3.6) and will bring forward code amendments to support that effort. **Task is in-progress.**

Task 1.3.5, Secretary of State process/portal. The Nevada Secretary of State uses its Silverflume software application to process Nevada State business license applications on-line. The Nevada Department of Taxation is linked through Silverflume for its licensing requirements. The Accela contract includes a deliverable product for electronic connection between the regional license and permit program and Silverflume. The current deliverable product is for one-way communication between the Accela program and Silverflume (i.e., direct our customers to Silverflume to complete State licensing requirements, and provide license data to State). However, licensing staff will engage the Secretary of State's Office at the appropriate time to hopefully leverage the connection to provide license information both ways (i.e., Accela program to Silverflume, and visa-versa). This two-way connection will require cooperation from the Secretary of State's Office. The new regional license and permit program is scheduled to go live in **January of 2016**.

Task 1.3.6, Regional business license. The regional business license was the SSEOC's principal goal, and remains the goal of all three jurisdictions' licensing staff. The regional license and permit program is the critical component of any

regional license efforts. All three jurisdictions must be able to seamlessly share license data and information to set the stage for regional licensure. As noted earlier in Task 1.3.4, licensing staff will commence work on this task once the regional license and permit program goes live. **Task is in-progress.**

Task 1.3.7, Parallel processes. This task required all three jurisdictions' licensing staff to engage various stakeholders and to seek out best practices throughout any of the *Scope of Work's* tasks. License staff reached out to stakeholders during preparation work leading to the awarding of the regional license and permit program, and also engaged those stakeholders on a potential regional technology fee to recoup development costs associated with the program. License staff will continue this outreach effort with Tasks 1.3.4 and 1.3.6. **Task is in-progress.**

Staff requests that the Washoe County Board of County Commissioners provide direction on the current and future actions and initiatives to realize a regional licensure program.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

No fiscal impact.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Board of County Commissioners receive the presentation, discuss and provide direction to staff on the actions and initiatives to realize a regional licensure program.

### **POSSIBLE MOTION**

Should the Board agree with staff's recommendation, a possible motion would be:

"Move to provide the following direction to staff on the actions and initiatives to realize a regional licensure program (insert direction)."

Attachments: A. Scope of Work for Business Licenses  
B. List of changes to business license processes to facilitate regional business license processes

xc: Regional business license working group (Reno: Michael Chaump, Amber Drlika; Sparks: Steve Driscoll, Chris Syverson, Lisa Hunderman; Washoe County: Karin Kremers)

## Scope of Work for Business Licenses

**The Shared Services Subcommittee on Building Permits and Business Licenses approved the Scope of Work on June 16, 2011.**

### 1.1 Work Plan Objectives

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The Shared Services Elected Officials Committee engaged a consultant to prepare recommendations related to human resources, information technology and purchasing. Subsequently the Committee determined that the next two highest priorities should be building permits and business licenses and that a subcommittee and staff should analyze and prepare recommendations for these two services.

The Shared Services Subcommittee on Building Permits and Business Licenses was appointed by the Washoe County Commission and Reno City Council. The Subcommittee includes one Reno City Council member (Sharon Zadra), two private sector representatives appointed by the Reno City Council (Denise Jacobsen and Craig Willcut), one Washoe County Commission member (John Breternitz) and two private sector members appointed by the the Washoe County Commission (Dick Bostdorf and Greg Peek). Staff support is provided by Washoe County (Dave Childs, Assistant County Manager) and the City of Reno (John Hester, Assistant City Manager).

The Subcommittee completed its work on building permits and is now focused on business licenses. The City of Sparks has worked with Reno and Washoe County in the past to coordinate business license services (e.g., Reno, Sparks and Washoe County have created a common business license application). Sparks staff (Steve Driscoll, Assistant City Manager) is participating in supporting the Subcommittee now that it is addressing business licenses.

The Subcommittee adopted the following 12 objectives for use in analysis and preparation of recommendations for business license services:

1. Save money
2. Improve service to end user
3. One stop shop/process
4. Interfaces with others outside this group
5. Mutual benefit
6. Can do together, not separately
7. Life and safety
8. Prepared for future technology
9. "Implementable"
10. Simplify process
11. Accommodate various customer "levels"
12. Certainty

## 1.2 Desired Outcomes

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The desired outcomes of this work effort include:

1. The option for a business license customer to make one stop to obtain a multi-jurisdictional business license;
2. The option for a business license customer to apply for and receive a business license on-line;
3. Identification and modification of provisions of the Municipal and County Codes to create common licensing requirements unless a single jurisdiction explicitly identifies exceptions;
4. Creation of an interface with the state level business license process and portal proposed by the Nevada Secretary of State; and
5. Investigation, analysis and possible implementation of a regional business license that is good in all three jurisdictions.

## 1.3 Work Plan

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The Work Plan to address the five outcomes above is comprised of seven integrated tasks (1.3.1-1.3.7). For each task the subtasks are listed as well as the deliverables, current status and projected time required for completion. All tasks will be completed by Subcommittee support staff.

### Task 1.3.1: Document Existing Shared Services

#### Subtasks:

- ◆ Single application for Reno, Sparks and Washoe County
  - Over the last two years the staff from all three jurisdictions have developed and refined a common paper application. The potential amendments to that application will be identified as part of this subtask.
- ◆ Web link to other jurisdictions' business license home pages
  - The three jurisdictions currently have web links to the State as well as each other's web pages. Enhancements that can be made to prepare for development of an on-line application will be identified as part of this subtask

#### Deliverables, Status and Time Required:

- ◆ Deliverables: Handouts and Powerpoint presentation documenting the existing business license shared services.

- ◆ Status: These subtasks are completed. This information was presented to the Subcommittee at their May 19, 2011 meeting.
- ◆ Time Required: No additional time is required.

#### Task 1.3.2: One stop for multi-jurisdictional licensure

##### Subtasks:

- ◆ Revised single application
  - Often a business is located in one jurisdiction and provides services within that and other jurisdictions. When the business is located in Reno, Sparks or unincorporated Washoe County, the objective is that the jurisdiction in which it is located will be able to issue a business license for that business to operate in that jurisdiction and to provide service in the other two jurisdictions. When the business is not located in Reno, Sparks or unincorporated Washoe County but provides services in one or more of the three jurisdictions, the objective is that any of the jurisdictions will be able to issue a business license for that business to provide services. This subtask will result in a revised single application that can be used to meet these objectives. This subtask will also include identifying a single set of support documents (e.g., State business license, County fictitious name certificate, etc.) to support the revised single application.
- ◆ Fee collection and distribution
  - There are a number of options for collecting and distributing fees. The procedure that is developed will maintain the existing fee schedules that differ by jurisdiction. Options for collection of the application (i.e., processing) fee and license fee together at the same point in the process, or separately at different points in the process will be considered. Depending on which option is preferred and how the application is processed (see Application requirements subtask below), who receives the fee and how it is distributed, if necessary, will be determined. For example, if the application fee is paid before processing and the license fee after processing, the application fee could be collected by one jurisdiction and the license fee paid separately to each jurisdiction as those licenses are issued. This subtask will result in a procedure for collection and distribution of application and license fees.

◆ Application requirements

- Each jurisdiction generally utilizes the same information for processing application, but the method used to obtain that information varies. For example, certain jurisdictions require the applicant to provide information indicating that the proper zoning is in place while other jurisdictions determine that internally as part of the application review process. These differences are part of the reason that fees vary by jurisdiction. This subtask will determine the application requirements and changes, if any, by jurisdiction.

◆ Processing

- There are a number of options for multi-jurisdictional application processing. As a starting point the following conceptual multi-jurisdictional process has been developed for this work plan. The conceptual process includes the following steps:
  - Jurisdiction receiving new application (“home” jurisdiction) confirms that no debts are outstanding (if applicable to jurisdiction)
  - “Home” jurisdiction enters new license information into database and creates license file
  - Licenses issued:
    - “Home” jurisdiction processes and issues license for own jurisdiction
    - “Home” jurisdiction issues “temporary” license for other jurisdictions
  - Required information sent to other two jurisdictions
    - Each jurisdiction enters information into own database and creates license file with required information
    - Common information (e.g., State business license) on file with “home” jurisdiction
  - Other jurisdictions process and issue own licenses
  - Renewal applications accepted by “home” or other jurisdictions and processed by each jurisdiction
  - License changes (e.g., ownership, location, etc.) processed through “home” jurisdiction
    - “Home” jurisdiction collects fees for all three jurisdictions

- “Home” jurisdiction provides changed information to other jurisdictions
- Cancelled licenses processed through “home” jurisdiction
  - “Home” jurisdiction notifies other jurisdictions

This conceptual multi-jurisdictional process will be analyzed legally, evaluated, revised and refined. At that point it will be presented to the Subcommittee for review and recommendation to the Shared Services Elected Officials Committee and the individual jurisdictions.

**Deliverables, Status and Time Required:**

- ◆ Deliverables: Handouts and Powerpoint presentation documenting the one stop multi-jurisdictional process; one stop multi-jurisdictional process ready for immediate implementation.
- ◆ Status: Conceptual one stop multi-jurisdictional process completed as described above. Other work on these subtasks not initiated.
- ◆ Time Required: 6 months to presentation to Subcommittee (January, 2012).

**Task 1.3.3: On-line license application**

**Subtasks:**

- ◆ Common database
  - The first subtask in development of an on-line application is creation of a common database. This database will be populated when an application is received and the data will be shared by all jurisdictions.
- ◆ Revised application
  - A single application is a critical component of an on-line application process. The on-line application will allow an applicant to attach required documents (e.g., State business license, County fictitious name certificate). Based on the selection of the type of business license desired, the on-line application will provide the required on-screen forms to be completed and define the the digital documents to be provided as attachments.

◆ **On-line payment**

- The on-line application will allow the applicant to pay a single combined fee on-line. The on-line payment will include the following:
  - Methodology to calculate appropriate fees based on projected gross revenues
  - Ability to base collected review and inspection fees on the type of license requested
  - Methodology for single source collection of all fees and distribution of correct fee amounts to each of the jurisdictions

◆ **Processing**

- After the application is submitted, depending on the type of business license, the following steps are required:
  - Approval, and in some cases inspections, by other agencies
  - Criminal history background investigation or local police records check
  - Clearance of all payments
  - Required inspections
  - Issue the license (option via e-mail or postal service)
  - If denied, appeal or refund of fees

As the business license application is processed, the status of each step and comments from reviewing agencies will be available on-line. This is similar to the now on-line information currently available to building permit applicants.

**Deliverables, Status and Time Required:**

- ◆ **Deliverables:** On-line application
- ◆ **Status:** No work on these subtasks has been initiated. If existing software in one or more of the jurisdictions can not be used, additional funding will be required.
- ◆ **Time Required:** 15 months (January 2012 to April 2013), depending on funding

#### Task 1.3.4: Municipal and County code amendments

##### Subtasks:

- ◆ Licensing requirements
  - The opportunities to make licensing requirements the same for all jurisdictions will be identified and presented to the Subcommittee. In some cases the requirements can be made the same between jurisdictions. In other cases the requirements that apply in a single jurisdiction can be removed. Examples include:
    - Requiring articles of incorporation for corporations
    - Approval of privileged licenses by elected officials only
    - Changes in fee schedules
    - Reducing the number of exclusive license types
  - Other requirements may remain different between jurisdictions simply because policy makers have chosen to make them that way, often because of the varying nature of the development and businesses between the jurisdictions. Examples include liquor stores, gaming, etc. These will also be identified and presented to the Subcommittee.

##### Deliverables, Status and Time Required:

- ◆ Deliverables: A list of possible code amendments to make licensing requirements the same and remove licensing requirements when only applicable in one jurisdiction, and a list of the explicit differences in requirements that should be maintained.
- ◆ Status: No work has been initiated on these subtasks.
- ◆ Time Required: 12 months (July 2012 to June 2013)

#### Task 1.3.5: Secretary of State process/portal

##### Subtasks:

###### *To be reformatted*

- a. State business license issued by Secretary of State
- b. Each jurisdiction's license web pages have a link to the Secretary of State's license web page
- c. Install a kiosk or provide a separate PC for applicant's use

- d. Expand to other agencies:
  - 1) Nevada Taxation Department for Taxation certificate
  - 2) Secretary of State's Office for Article of Incorporation
  - 3) NDBI for proof of worker's compensation
  - 4) County Clerk for fictitious name certificate

**Deliverables, Status and Time Required:**

- ◆ Deliverables:
- ◆ Status:
- ◆ Time Required: 3 months (January 2012 to April 2012)

**Task 1.3.6: Regional business license**

**Subtasks:**

*To be reformatted*

- a. One license good in all three jurisdictions
- b. Multiple approaches, all warrant further investigation and study:
  - 1) Current licensing operations, each can issue regional license
  - 2) Single licensing agency for all three jurisdictions
  - 3) Regional licenses valid only for businesses requiring licensure by and/or in more than one jurisdiction

**Deliverables, Status and Time Required:**

- ◆ Deliverables:
- ◆ Status:
- ◆ Time Required: 24 months (July 2012 to June 2014)

**Task 1.3.7: Parallel processes**

**Subtasks:**

*To be reformatted*

- 1. Examine best practices from other locations
- 2. Form a stakeholders group to assist in one or more of the proposed initiatives
  - a. Chamber(s) of Commerce (Reno, Sparks, North Tahoe)
  - b. Retail Association of Nevada
  - c. Nevada Taxpayers Association

- d. Association of General Contractors
- e. Front Line Staff
- f. Others?

**Deliverables, Status and Time Required:**

- ◆ Deliverables:
- ◆ Status:
- ◆ Time Required: 24 months (July 2012 to June 2014)

## Attachment B. List of changes to business license processes

### List of changes to business license processes to facilitate regional business license processes

The following is list of changes to each jurisdiction's business license processes to facilitate a regional business license process. There are several categories to the list, changes identified as:

- **Completed** are internal license policies which have been modified by one or more jurisdictions to a common regional policy or procedure;
- **In progress** are policies under discussion by the three jurisdictions' licensing staff;
- **Policy** reflect those policies or procedures which will require management or elected official approval to implement by one or more jurisdictions (those jurisdictions are noted); and,
- **Code changes** will require municipal or County code amendments by one or more jurisdictions (those jurisdictions are noted) in order for all three jurisdictions' regulations to mirror each other.

Notes: Jurisdictions are coded as: R = Reno; S = Sparks, and W = Washoe County.  
"also part of Acella" means a component of the future regional license and permit program.

The policy and code changes are on temporary suspense as all three jurisdictions' staff are focused on working with Acella and Technology Services staff to implement the new regional license and permit program. Work will re-commence on those items after Acella goes live.

Process	Status
1. Business start date (based on application receipt)	Completed
2. Change of business description (goods or services provided or sold)	Completed
3. Change of business entity	Completed
4. Change of business or licensee mailing address	Completed
5. Change of business name	Completed
6. Change of business ownership	Completed
7. Change of licensee for non-privileged licenses (no elected body review and approval)	Completed
8. Clarifying owner and/or officer licensee status	Completed
9. Doing Business As (DBA) proof of filing	Completed
10. Recording complaints about unlicensed businesses	Completed (also part of Acella)
11. Signatures on application	Completed
12. Change of business location	In progress
13. Change of licensee for privileged licenses (elected body review and approval)	In progress
14. Exemptions for gross receipt reporting	In progress
15. Licensing of bank branch offices	In progress
16. List of State requirements for occupations or businesses	In progress

17. Multi-jurisdictional change of a form process (i.e., form submitted with original application)	In progress
18. Multi-jurisdictional license change form process	In progress
19. Enforcement based on reported gross receipts	Policy (S,W)
20. Initial application inspections – common, standardized agency review & collection of inspection fees	Policy (S, W) (also part of Acella)
21. Length of time a criminal history inquiry remains valid (and then only need a local police records check)	Policy (S,W)
22. No longer conducting business	Policy (R,W)
23. Renewals – grace periods, charges for late renewals	Policy (R, S, W)
24. Renewals – when & method to notify, processing	Policy (R,S,W) (also part of Acella)
25. Time frame for application to expire when actions required by applicant are not completed	Policy (S, W)
26. Verification of Federal and State licensure/permitting	Policy (R,S)
27. Waiving license penalties when appropriate	Policy (S,W)
28. Activities conducted by independent contractors which do not require a business license	Code changes (R,S,W)
29. Authorization to conduct business	Code change (W)
30. Business license fees (based on combined fees, or common regional fees)	Code changes (R,S,W)
31. Businesses not required to obtain a business license	Code changes (R)
32. Charging past license fees for unlicensed businesses	Code changes (W)
33. Common regional penalty for unlicensed businesses	Code changes (R,S,W)
34. Criminal history inquiry (background investigations) process and results reporting	Code changes (R,S,W)
35. Licensing commercial real estate businesses	Code changes (R)
36. Licenses for seasonal activities (e.g., pumpkin patch)	Code changes (R,S)
37. Licensing of banks	Code changes (S)
38. Going out of business sales	Code changes (R)
39. Mobile food vendor licensure	Code changes (R,S,W)
40. Reporting gross receipts for renewal fees	Code changes (R,S,W)
41. Types of licenses requiring a criminal history inquiry	Code changes (R,S,W)

# Regional Licensure

Washoe County Commission

October 28, 2014



# Regional licensure

**SSEOC approved business license scope of work in August of 2011**

- **Included as Exhibit A to staff report**
- **Staff report outlines progress on each work plan item from scope of work**
- **Highlights on following slides**



# Regional licensure

## Completed

- Documenting existing shared processes
  - Attachment B to the staff report
- Single regional license application form
- Multi-jurisdictional license
- Contract with Accela for regional license and permit program (go live in January 2016)



# Regional licensure

## In-progress

- On-line licensure (January 2016)
- Shared data with Silverflume (SOS web site) (January 2016)
- Stakeholder involvement (on-going)
- Code changes (after January 2016)
- Regional business license (after January 2016)



# Regional Licensure

## Questions?

